



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

Government Buildings Great George Street London SW1P 3AJ

Telephone Direct Dialling 01-233 4060
Exchange 01-233 3000

Mr T J Flesher
Principal Private Secretary
to the Prime Minister

Your reference

Our reference ADM 18/47/03

Date 2 December 1982

Dear Mr Flesher,

VISITS TO NORTHERN IRELAND BY THE PRIME MINISTER - CODEWORD

.... I attach for your personal information copy No **1** of a memorandum explaining the use of a codeword in connection with any visits to Northern Ireland by the Prime Minister. Will you please note its contents and acknowledge receipt by signing and returning to me the enclosed receipt form.

The memorandum dated 11 March 1981 explaining the use of the previous codeword is to be destroyed.

In the event of an impending visit to Northern Ireland by the Prime Minister the necessary operational guidance will be passed to you at the appropriate time, under reference of the codeword.

Yours sincerely,
Sam Newman.

MRS. P. NEWMAN
Establishment Division

SECRET

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SECRET

Copy No. 1

ADM 18/47/03

VISITS TO NORTHERN IRELAND BY THE PRIME MINISTER -
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF CODEWORD

1. It has been agreed with No.10 Downing Street that any visit by the Prime Minister to Northern Ireland should be the subject of an operational codeword. This will make it easier to inform officers who need to know of the visit beforehand, and will facilitate communication about the visit in writing or by telephone.
2. The codeword to be used is PISTON. It should normally be used in the form "OPERATION PISTON". The formal meaning of the codeword is "Visit of the Prime Minister to Northern Ireland". The codeword itself is classified CONFIDENTIAL; its meaning is classified SECRET.
3. Knowledge of the codeword and its meaning is to be controlled on the strictest possible "need to know" basis. This memorandum is accordingly issued on the authority of the PUS of NIO for the personal information of the addressee. It should not be shown, nor should the codeword or its meaning be revealed orally or in any other document, to any other officer without prior consultation with me.
4. The codeword is changed after each visit. It may also need to be changed if it is compromised by incorrect use, unauthorised communication of its meaning, or through a security breach. Any known or suspected compromise of the codeword should be reported immediately by telephone in guarded terms, and then in writing to me (telephone: 01-233 4060).

MRS. P.M. NEWMAN
Establishment Division
2 December 1982

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE,
GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON, SW1P 3AJ

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